The course will be taught onsite if possible, in hybrid form if needed (with some students synchronously online), and fully online if this is required.

Syllabus

Course Description:

This is an introductory course in the developing field of studies on communism, women and gender, in which we will explore historical, theoretical and global perspectives on the topic. We will discuss the complex question of what communism was (or is), emphasizing the need to distinguish between communism as an ideology, a political movement, or a regime, and, regardless, the need to carefully historicize and contextualize the phenomena in question. The dominant anti-communist discourse homogenizes “communism” and tends to conflate it with the dictatorships of (mostly) Stalin and (to a lesser extent) Mao. This view leaves out large parts of the history of communism worldwide.

For much of the twentieth century, millions of women and men around the world were active in communist or communist-inspired or supported political movements for social justice and national independence, and many gave their lives in struggles to establish or defend socialist or communist states. As well, for millions of people around the world, the Soviet Union, the first socialist state, was a land of hope. The Soviet Union had achieved impressive economic growth by the 1950s, it promoted women’s emancipation, anti-racism and anti-colonialism, and supported progressive movements worldwide. An understanding of either the Soviet Union or China as one-dimensional totalitarian and patriarchal states cannot explain their achievements in promulgating and implementing women’s rights, nor where their “women-friendly” legislation and policies came from. The history of communism cannot be understood either without taking into account the various forms of anticommunism, including the military and economic campaigns the USA waged or supported against (alleged) communist movements and countries worldwide.

Moving beyond the common totalitarian, Eurocentric, androcentric, and gender-blind approaches to the history of communism, in this course we ask questions about women and women’s organizations and about gender and “race” in these histories, about the role of
communists in European and global struggles against fascism, racism, colonialism and imperialism; and about the impact of the manifold attempts to undermine communism. This will allow us to begin to rethink the meaning of "communism" for women and men around the world in more complex and encompassing ways.

**Onsite or hybrid teaching:**

**Learning activities/Teaching methods:**
- Classes will combine lectures on broader developments and key concepts;
- Seminar discussions of the mandatory readings (with a focus on close reading), guided by questions;
- Watching and discussing various videos in class;
- The possibility of student presentations;
- The writing of a short reaction paper on one of the readings in the syllabus;
- Preparing and writing a term paper.

**Learning outcomes:**
The course provides students with a basic knowledge of the main socialist and communist ideas on women’s emancipation and social justice more generally. They will learn to critically engage with mainstream, generally male-centered and Euro-centric narratives on the history of communism and understand the importance of applying a critical and global perspective to this topic. Students will also become acquainted with key recent publications in this rapidly developing field.

**Assessment:**
- Active participation in class: 25% of the grade
- **One reaction paper or in-class presentation:** 25% of the grade
- Term paper: 50% of the grade

**Fully online teaching:**

**Learning activities/Teaching methods:**
- Short audio-recorded lectures with power point on broader developments and key concepts of the readings;
- Weekly assignments related to the mandatory readings, including possibly some work in small groups;
- Writing one reaction paper or doing a presentation (of one of the readings or your research topic);
- Practicing how to design and write a (small) research paper.
Weekly tutorials:
They will be held via Zoom and will be 45 minutes long. Ideally you participate in all tutorials weekly, but the minimum is 8. If you cannot attend a tutorial because of an illness or another acceptable reason, you need to inform either Professor Francisca de Haan or TA Anna Grutza in advance so we can collectively find a make-up solution. In addition, students can sign up for individual (or small group) sessions with Anna Grutza.

Weekly assignment:
This weekly assignment provides your own feedback on the readings, in the form of three questions, short comments, and/or or links to documents, videos, exhibitions, films, or pictures. The format is open, but you respond to that week’s readings. If one of your reactions consists of a link, video, picture, etc., please explain what the material is about so that it becomes clear why you chose it. E.g. This website is a latinx feminist blog by latina journalist [name] and it contradicts [author]’s argument on the dynamics between grassroots feminism and academia... See the entry [title] from [date]” where...
Your assignment should be concise: max. around 250 words, or no longer than a page and a half (double spaced).

The weekly assignment for week 1 will be submitted not later than the Friday of week 1 (16.00 CET) and so on. Moodle will not accept late submissions, so please keep track of your time.
You will receive feedback in the beginning of the following week at the latest. These weekly assignments will not be graded separately; they are part of the 25% of the grade for “weekly assignments”. We will indicate it of course if there is a problem.

Learning outcomes:
The course provides students with a basic knowledge of the main socialist and communist ideas on women’s emancipation and social justice more generally. They will learn to critically engage with mainstream, generally male-centered and Euro-centric narratives on the history of communism and understand the importance of applying a critical and global perspective to this topic. Students will also become acquainted with key recent publications in this rapidly developing field.

Assessment:
Active participation in the weekly online tutorials: 25% of the grade
Weekly assignments: 25% of the grade
One reaction paper or presentation during the tutorial: 25% of the grade
Term paper: 25% of the grade
Whatever the class format, **active class participation** means that your questions or comments show that you have read the text(s) and that you participate in the class/group discussion.

**Reaction paper:**
The reaction paper must provide a coherent summary (2/3 of the paper) of and reflection (1/3 of the paper) on one of the readings included in the syllabus; length 1.5 to 2 pages (spaced 1.5).

**Deadline:** week 4, noon of the day of our class.

**Student presentations: to be discussed in class 1**

**Term paper:**
To prepare the term paper, you must submit a 1 to 2-page **term paper proposal** that includes the paper title, a short introduction of the topic, the central question, the structure of the paper, and the literature and sources you intend to use. The **term paper must engage with some of the theoretical issues and questions discussed in the course and your bibliography will include some of the readings for the course as well as literature that you have found yourself.**

The term paper has to be around 10-12 pages in length (spaced 1.5).

- **Deadline term paper proposal:** Week 6, noon of the day of our class.
- **Deadline term paper:** Last Friday of the term.

Reaction paper, term paper proposal and term paper are to be **submitted by email**. You can send them as a pdf optionally (extra) but you must send them as **word doc**.

**Academic Misconduct:**
Academic misconduct involves acts which may subvert or compromise the integrity of the educational process at CEU. Any form of **plagiarism**, i.e., representing the ideas or words of another without proper attribution to the source of those ideas of words, whether intentional or not, is considered a serious form of academic misconduct. Students should consult the instructor or the Centre for Academic Writing if they are unclear about the difference between appropriate citation and plagiarism. **Acts of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, will result in serious consequences, such as a failing grade for the assignment or course.** Students are assumed to be fully aware of plagiarism and its consequences. For more information, please refer to CEU’s Policy on Plagiarism, CEU Code of Ethics, or the Centre for Academic Writing.

**Student Evaluations:**
Student feedback is welcome at any time during the course of study. Informal midterm evaluations will be conducted in Week 5, and formal online evaluations of courses and instructors are collected by CEU at the end of term. These evaluations are **anonymous**. Students are encouraged to complete these evaluations as they are important for the continuous improvement of the course, as well as for faculty and TA assessments.
Support during the COVID-19 Pandemic:
In situations that are uncertain and evolving such as the COVID-19 pandemic, it is normal to experience stress, anxiety or sadness. Please reach out to your classmates or the instructor, should you require any additional support or assistance. CEU also offers a range of support services that you may find useful:

- **Student Counselling Services** offers confidential student psychological counselling services.
- Emergency financial support is available to students whose studies have been interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic via the **COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Fund**.
- The **Centre for Academic Writing** provides students with guidance and support, including courses in academic writing and individual consultations.
- The **CEU Library** offers online support.

________________________________________

Course Schedule

Part 1: Historical Context and Early Socialist and Communist Thinkers on Women and Gender

Week 1: Course Introduction


Week 2: Marxist Classics and/on Women and Gender


Additional reading:

Week 3: Alexandra Kollontai and Women’s Organizations


Part 2: Socialism in the USSR and Yugoslavia

Week 4: Rethinking Bolshevik Feminism


Week 5: Bolshevik Feminism in Central Asia

  - Chapter 3: “The Revolution and Rights for Uzbek Women,” 53–75

Week 6: Women in Socialist Yugoslavia


- We’ll watch the historical documentary “Pine and Fir Trees: Women’s Memories of Life during Socialism (2002)” by Sanja Ivekovic.
Part 3: Global Perspectives on Communism and Women’s Activism

Week 7: Women in Communist China


- In class: a 30-minute documentary on women in China, past and present: “From Iron Girls to Left-Over Women.”

Week 8: Communist Women in Malaya/Malaysia


- additional reading: Ch. 4, 50-64.

Week 9: Black Communist Women in the USA


Part 4: Varieties of Anti-Communism

Week 10: Soviet Gender Equality under US Assessment: Gathering Knowledge about Privacy and Family Life

Class taught by TA and PhD candidate Anna Grutza.


- and one more tba.
Week 11: The impact of US anti-Communism within the USA


Week 12: The 1965/66 mass murder in Indonesia


AND Course Conclusions.